

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-20 NSC-10 SPC-03 PM-07 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01

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R 281218Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 365

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 3177

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN, CE

SUBJ: VISIT BY PM BANDDRANAIKE TO INDIA

REF DELHI 15107

1. DAILY SUN OF 28 DEC REPORTS THAT INDIAN FOREIGN SECRETARY KEWAL SINGH VISITED SRI LANKA DEC 22 (A) TO DELIVER INVITATION FROM MRS. GANDHI TO PM BANDARANAIKE TO BE "THE GUEST OF HONOR" AT REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATION IN NEW DELHI JAN 26, (B) TO DISCUSS DETAILS OF MRS. BANDARANAIKE'S STATE VISIT TO INDIA, AND (C) TO TAKE UP AGENDA FOR TALKS BETWEEN TWO PRIME MINISTERS. ARTICLE STATES MRS. B IS EXPECTED TO LEAVE FOR INDIA ON 23 JAN. SHE WILL BE PRECEDED IN SECOND WEEK JAN BY DELEGATION LED BY W.T. JAYASINGHE, SECRETARY MDFA, WHICH WILL PREPARE GROUND.

2. NEWSPAPER GIVES AGENDA ITEMS AS: (A) JOINT ECONOMIC COOPERATION, (B) INDO-CEYLON AGREEMENT AND FUTURE OF 150,000 "STATELESS" NOT COVERED BY IT, (C) INTERNATIONAL SITUATION INCLUDING WEST ASIA, (C) KACHCHATIVU, AND (E) DELIMITATION OF TERRITORIAL WATERS. MDFA OFFICIAL IN CHARGE INDIAN MATTERS HAS CONFIRMED DETAILS OF NEWS ITEMS EXCEPT THAT DATES ARE STILL SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION.

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3. UNANNOUNCED VISIT BY INDIAN FOREIGN SECRETARY WILL UN-

DOUBTEDLY SMOOTH WAY FOR PM BANDARANAIKE'S VISIT AND IS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF GOI'S ATTEMPTS TO PROMOTE LESS THORNY RELATIONSHIP WITH HER SMALL NEIGHBOR. IN BACKGROUND IS WARMTH OF SINO-CEYLONESE RELATIONS, EXEMPLIFIED BY RECENT RENEWAL OF RICE/RUBBER BARTER AGREEMENT AND APPARENT GIFT BY PRC OF 40,000 TONS OF RICE. RECENT FLURRY OF HIGH-LEVEL VISIT BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES (KEWAL SINGH IN MID-OCT AND DEC, GSL DEP MINISTER OF FIREIGN AFFAIRS TO DELHI IN NOV, AND UPCOMING VISIT BY JAYASINGHE IN JAN) MAY INDICATE SPECIAL EFFORT TO COME TO AGREEMENT ON ONE OR MORE MAJOR BILATERAL ISSUES IN ORDER PRODUCE TANGIBLE FAVORABLE RESULT DURING VISIT AND ENHANCE PRESTIGE OF TWO PRIME MINSTERS.

BYRNE

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